SOFTWHERE

International Data Base (IDB). Diskettes containing demographic, economic, and social data on virtually any country are now available from the U.S. Census Bureau.

Each country diskette contains up to 94 tables, as well as annotations, references, and notes. A BASIC computer program is supplied to enable users to format the data for software packages such as Lotus 1-2-3, dBase, SuperCalc, and SPSS. Documentation is also included. The diskettes are IBM-PC compatible.

A total of 203 countries is available on IDB. The cost for the first country is $15.00; each additional country is $7.50. IDB statistical tables are also available in printed form. For further information and an order form, contact: Greg Nowarkowski, Center for International Research, Scuderi Building, Rm. 409, U.S. Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C. 20233. (301) 763-4286.

Survival 1.1 is a survival analysis program that produces various types of life tables, making allowance for multiple decrement and cause-deleted rates for up to 15 event categories. The output includes standard errors of the principal life table terms and significance tests of differences between tables when more than one table is entered, and includes decomposition of differences in life expectancy by cause for multiple decrement tables.

This program is IBM-PC compatible, and requires 192K or more of RAM. Cost of disk and documentation is $10.00 (check payable to CHAMPS/UTSPH). Write: CHAMPS Office, University of Texas School of Public Health, P.O. Box 20186, Houston, Tex. 77225.

CORRECTION

Liu Zheng was incorrectly identified in the July/August *PT* ("IUSSP Meets on the Banks of the Arno"). Mr. Liu is Director, Population Research Institute, Chinese People's University, Beijing. The Director of China's 1982 Census was Li Chengrui, who submitted a paper featured at the IUSSP meeting but was not present at Florence.

TAKE A NUMBER . . .

A Riot of Rankings: A new book by George Thomas Kurian, *The New Book of World Rankings* (Facts on File, New York, $14.95 in paper) contains over 100,000 bits of information which rank the world's countries on the trivial and not-so-trivial.

Recognizing that definitions of concepts may vary from country to country and that data quality is often fuzzy, Kurian presents 343 tables of rankings which can become a bit like eating peanuts, statistically speaking. Here goes.

Who has the most bachelors? French Guyana (get it? Guyana?) with 53.2 percent of its males aged 45-49 unmarried; next is Kenya, 32.1 percent. At the other end of the scale is Pitcairn Island (pop. 67) with all of Fletcher Christian's male descendants spoken for. Central Park-sized Monaco comes in as the world's most densely populated country, with 17,450 persons per sq. kilometer; least populated of all is Mongolia with each sq. kilometer home to but 1 person.

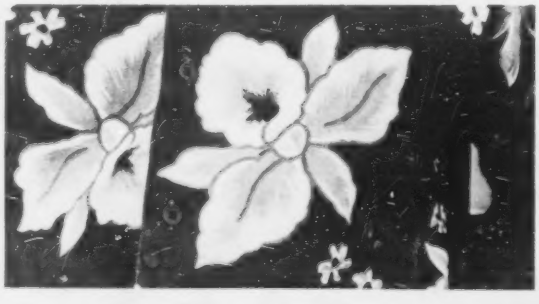
Nations are ever ranked on age. Ethiopia gained independence in 3000 B.C. and is the oldest continuous nation. The United States, which we often think of as a new nation, actually ranks 16th, ahead of some European countries and even Greece, since the definition uses "present form of government" as its yardstick. On the index of "Democratization," Denmark is the most democratic, with the U.S. a lowly 22nd; Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Vietnam, and North Yemen round out the bottom five on this one.

Sometimes using the smallest countries in the rankings is not helpful. On foreign aid per capita, the top 12 or so countries are all small island nations with small populations and, therefore, small denominators. As often as not a country like Vanuatu will wind up as either first or last on a list of rankings, but that's a problem that plagues all ranking schemes.

Iceland has the highest protein consumption, Zaire the lowest . . . Chad has the highest proportion of blind persons, 5 percent, the U.S. has 0.2 percent . . . the Soviet Union ranks third in movie attendance with the U.S. only 39th . . . the U.S. has more daily newspapers than anyone, 1,787, but Turkey and West Germany, with far smaller populations, are not far behind with 1,115 and 1,093, respectively—while *Pravda* may predominate in the USSR, it has company: 638 other dailies . . . the U.S. leads the world in wheat production, right? Wrong, the USSR does. The U.S. is also bested in tobacco production by China, milk by the USSR, and peanuts by India . . . But at least some expectations hold up: Brazil and Colombia lead in coffee.

. . . addenda

Signs of the Inexorable Aging of America — I



Hawaiian shirts (aka Aloha shirts), once exclusive of the Tropics, now colorfully envelop the 50 states like a tent. One reason may be that they cover the physique like a tent, a couture factor that may become increasingly important as the U.S. continues inexorably to age.

CURRENT READINGS

PRB welcomes materials on population topics for possible inclusion in Current Readings. Publishers may address review copies to Book Review Editor, POPULATION TODAY, Population Reference Bureau, 2213 M St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037.

INFANTICIDE: Comparative and Evolutionary Perspectives, edited by Glenn Hausfater and Sarah Blaffer Hrdy. New York: Aldine, 1984. $34.95. 598 pages. ISBN 0-202-0202-3.

This work of 25 essays is the result of a conference at Cornell University on "Infanticide in Animals and Man." The book brings together a wide range of specialists of various disciplines pointing to widespread occurrence of infanticide in nature.

In addition, four of the contributors deal with infanticide in man. Susan C. M. Scrimshaw, in a fascinating review essay, gives an historical overview on infanticide in different societies. She discusses the current changed definitions of infanticide and the wide variety of infanticidal means including "selective neglect." Scrimshaw also addresses the variety of culture contextual reasons for female infanticide, among those reasons: disproportionate value assigned to male work, the holding of primary political power by men, and resource scarcity. She concludes that the "...tragedy is that modern contraceptives and even induced abortion have not sufficiently replaced infanticide as a means of fertility control."

—Alexander von Cube

"THE OLDEST OF THE OLD," special issue edited by R. Suzman and M.W. Waxman. *Milbank Memorial Fund Quarterly/Health and Society*, 1985, Vol. 63, No. 2. $6.50.

The editors of this volume on those 85 and older comment that it "represents the first and not the last word" on the oldest of the old. This book is an interesting and informative first.

This group, known as the "oldest old," constitutes only one percent of the U.S. population, yet it is growing faster than any other age group—the percentage of the population it represents will double in 15 years. Rapid growth of the extreme aged is not new: between 1940 and 1960, those 85 and older increased by 154 percent. What is new is official recognition that the number of the very old is now sufficiently large to have a major impact on health care and social services.

Until very recently, less was known about the oldest-old than about any other age group. Largely invisible and ignored because of their relatively small size and presumed remoteness, the oldest-old in the 1980s have entered the limelight as persons of concern to policymakers and fascination to researchers.

This special issue of Milbank's Health and Society series is the first major collection of research findings on the demography, health, economic status, and future prospects of this hitherto obscure age group. As a summary of the current state of knowledge, it is a must for anyone interested in the very old.

It is also most instructive about what is not known, and herein lie the most fruitful avenues for further research, for example: the special needs of older women, behavioral and genetic factors contributing to morbidity, racial differences in aging, the implications of long life for families who care for the aged, and the impact of extended longevity on long-term institutional care.

—Alice T. Day

THE MAGIC NUMBERS OF DR. MATRIX, by Martin Gardner. Buffalo, N.Y.: Prometheus Books, 1985. 240 pages. $19.95; $10.95 paper. ISBN 0-87975-281-5; 0-87975-282-3.

The adventures of Dr. Irving Joshua Matrix, elusive numerologist, statistical prestidigitator, and consultant extraordinaire, were faithfully chronicled over two decades by the *Scientific American's* Martin Gardner. If you never made the acquaintance of the mythical good doctor, you can catch up thanks to this newly published collection of his most outrageous pronouncements and escapades.

—Arthur Haupt

THE MALLING OF AMERICA: An Inside Look at the Great Consumer Paradise, by William Severini Kowinski. New York: William Morrow, 1985. 415 pages. $17.95. ISBN 0-688-04180-9.

This book's chatty author takes the reader on a tour of the U.S.'s great shopping malls, while casually tracing his subject from its modest beginnings in the first enclosed mall (Edina, Minn., 1956). While to some extent an exercise in anecdotal pop-sociology, this book is valuable for the glimpses it provides of the strange phenomenon of malling, which has in many places resulted in the end of traditional "Main Street America" and the beginning of a country where some major shopping malls now appear on Rand McNally maps.

—Arthur Haupt

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

AGING IN MODERN SOCIETY, edited by Dorothy Jerrome. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1983. 307 pages. $30.00.

AGRARIAN REFORM IN CONTEMPORARY DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, edited by Ajit Kumar Ghose. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1983. 364 pages. $35.00.

DIRECTORY OF SPECIAL LIBRARIES AND INFORMATION CENTERS IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA, edited by Brigitte T. Darnay. Ninth edition, in two parts. Detroit: Gale Research, 1985. Vol. 1. (The Directory). 735 pages. $320.00. Vol. 2. (Geographic and Personnel Indexes). 876 pages. $265.00.

FERTILITY, STERILIZATION, AND POPULATION GROWTH IN SHANTI NAGAR, INDIA: A Longitudinal Ethnographic Approach, by Stanley A. Freed et al. New York: American Museum of Natural History, 1985. 48 pages. $7.00.

INTERNATIONAL POPULATION CONFERENCE: Florence, Italy, 1985, Vols. 2 through 4. Liege, Belgium: International Union for the Scientific Study of Population.

THE KNOWLEDGE EXECUTIVE: Leadership in an Information Society, by Harlan Cleveland. New York: E. P. Dutton, 1985. 263 pages. $18.95.

REPRODUCTIVE CHANGE IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES: Insights from the World Fertility Survey edited by John Cleland et al. New York: Oxford University Press, 1985. 301 pages. $24.95.

SPOTLIGHT

PERU

Population, 1985 (est.): 19.7 million
Births per 1,000 pop. (1982): 35
Deaths per 1,000 pop. (1982): 10
Land area: 496,200 sq. miles
Percent of population aged 15 and under (1984): 41
Percent of population aged 65 and over (1984): 4
Infant mortality rate: 99 deaths per 1,000 live births
Life expectancy at birth: 59 years
Major exports (1982): copper, silver, fish and fish meal, lead, zinc
Major imports (1982): machinery, food products, chemicals
GNP per capita (1983): US$1,040
Capital: Lima (5.8 million pop.)

by Leon Yacher

South America's third largest country in area (after Brazil and Argentina), Peru is a nation with a most difficult topography. The Andes mountains divide it from north to south, resulting in a narrow desert coastline, the rugged mountain region known as the Sierra, and the tropical rain forest plain—which is the largest of the three regions and constitutes 63 percent of the country's land area.

These three areas are very dissimilar, creating an unusual set of circumstances for Peru's population. The climate on the coast is very dry and temperate. In the hot and humid Amazon basin, rainfall is plentiful, especially between November and April. The mountain region exhibits a dry season between May and November. The high elevations limit the productivity of the soils; yields are low and labor is hard. Rich in its history, this country was home to the Inca Empire which controlled most of the Andes region until the arrival of the Spaniards. Peru obtained its independence from Spain on July 28, 1821.

Economically, much of Peru's population still relies on the land: 40.7 percent of the labor force is employed in agriculture. However, only 15 percent of the national income is derived from agriculture.

Peru is highly urbanized, with the cities growing faster every year. In 1981, 65 percent of the country's total population growth occurred in its cities. While the country's population more than doubled between 1940 and 1981, the urban population during that time period multiplied fivefold. Much of the growth in the urban areas, particularly the area in and around the capital city of Lima, where one in three Peruvians now resides, is a result of migration from the mountain regions.

Peru's population is very young, with 41 percent under 15 years of age. Only 4 percent of the population is 65 years or older. The rate of growth is 2.6 percent. Birth rates have declined from 45 per 1,000 during the early 1960s to the present 35 per 1,000. The country's total fertility rate is 5.2 lifetime births per woman. Immigration is not a growth factor. In fact, only 0.4 percent of the population is foreign born (mostly from bordering countries).

Five major racial groups are represented in the country. The mestizos and whites represent 53 percent of the population; Indians account for 46 percent; and Asians, blacks, and undeclared make up the remaining one percent of Peru's population. The mestizo is the result of the intermixing of the Spanish and Indian people during and after the conquest of the region. Religion is another legacy of the Spaniards in Peru: 90 percent of the population is Catholic, while 5 percent is Protestant (0.2 percent are nonbelievers).

Education is a serious problem in Peru where 16 percent of the population age five and over has had no education at all, while 36 percent received up to a fourth grade education. Approximately 21 percent of the population is illiterate.

Perhaps the most serious problem facing the recently inaugurated President Alan Garcia (the first elected civilian president since 1945) is the country's disastrous economic state. With an annual inflation rate of 250 percent, and a US $13.5 billion foreign debt, Peru may be on the brink of social unrest and collapse. All this is complicated by the recent shift to urban terrorism by the Shining Path guerrillas, who are concentrating their efforts in Lima. The sol, Peru's monetary unit, has devalued from approximately 171 to the dollar in 1974 to the current rate of 12,400 per dollar. A new monetary system is being introduced called the Inti (which equals 1,000 soles).

Percent distribution of population by department

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